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ABSTRACT

This paper describes an experiment to measure attitudinal change in educable mentally retarded and normal children as a result of seeing a film entitled "The Hunter." The investigators, after previewing the film, outlined the attitudes and concepts contained in the film; question items were written to test these concepts. Essentially, the conceptual model stipulated that it is not desirable to own a gun, kill wildlife, or hunt. The question items were administered to three sample groups who did not see the film, and to two sample groups who did see the film. The responses were summarized using a standard "scalar distance" computer program which produced an item profile in terms of the deviation from the model answers. The rsults indicated that the subjects who saw the film gave responses which were more deviant from the model than those who did not see it. It was suggested that it may be necessary to compare adult ideals in terms of attitude with what really is. The responses of the sample suggest that the attitudinal model proposed and assigned to "The Hunter" was not in harmony with that of the population tested. (Author)

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MEASURING ATTITUDE CHANGE RESPONSE TO FILMS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to measure attitudinal change in educable mentally retarded and normal children as a result of seeing a film entitled "The Hunter." The investigators, after previewing the film, outlined the attitudes and concepts contained in the film; question items were written to test these concepts. Essentially, the conceptual model stipulated that it is not desirable to own a gun, kill wildlife, or hunt. The question items were administered to three sample groups who did not see the film, and to two sample groups who did see the film. The responses were summarized using a standard "scaler distance" computer program which produced an item profile in terms of the deviation from the model answers. The results indicated that the subjects who saw the film gave responses which were more deviant from the model than those who did not see it. It was suggested that it may be necessary to compare adult ideals in terms of attitude with what really is. The responses of the sample suggest that the attitudinal model proposed and assigned to "The Hunter" was not in harmony with that of the population tested.

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SPECIAL REPORT No. 7315
COMPUTER-BASED PROJECT for the EVALUATION of MEDIA for the HANDICAPPED

Title: MEASUREING ATTITUDE CHANGE RESPONSE TO FILMS

BACKGROUND

The Computer Based Project for the Evaluation of Media for the Handicapped, based on contract #OEC-9-423617-4357 (616) between the Syracuse (N.Y.) City School District and the Media Services and Captioned Films Branch, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (United States Office of Education) for the five year period July 1, 1969 through June 30, 1974. The major goal is to improve the instruction of handicapped children through the development and use of an evaluation system to measure the instructional effectiveness of films and other materials with educable mentally handicapped (EMH) children, in-service training and media support for special teachers, and studies related to the evaluation process and the populations used.

The Project has concentrated on the 600 films and 200 filmstrips from the Media Services and Captioned Films (BEH - USOE) depository; however, specific packages from Project LIFE, various elementary math curricula, and selected programs from Children's TV Workshop have also been evaluated. The evaluation model used requires that: 1) objectives of materials be specified and written; 2) instruments be constructed to test and measure effectiveness; and, 3) children be the major sources of evaluation information. A number of instruments and methodologies are employed in the gathering of cognitive and affective data from 900 EMH children and 80 special teachers to make the effectiveness decisions. Over half of the EMH population can neither read or write; therefore, a unique Student Response System (SRS) is employed, consisting of a twenty station G.E.-1000 SRS which can be operated in a group or individual recording mode and is connected to a remote computer system. The computer capabilities consist of remote telephone connections to the Rome (N.Y.) Air Development Command, the Honeywell time-shared network, and the Schenectady (N.Y.) G E Research and Development Center; and batch mode capabilities of the Syracuse City Schools, Syracuse University, and various commercial sources.

In-service and media support activities provide on-the-job training for teachers, teacher aides, equipment, and materials to the special teachers in the city schools. The research activities have centered around investigations and special problems related to the development of the evaluation model. The four major areas considered are: 1) testing effects, 2) captioning effects, 3) special student characteristics; and, 4) evaluation procedures validation.

Documentation of the major activities appear in the five annual reports and the 600 evaluations prepared on materials used. Staff members were encouraged to prepare special reports and the attached paper is one of these. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Computer Based Project, the United States Office of Education, or the Syracuse City School District, and no official endorsement by any of the agencies should be inferred.

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Allen Rosing
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MEASURING ATTITUDE CHANGE RESPONSE TO FILMS

Included in the investigations proposed in the fourth year of the Computer Based Project (CBP, 1972) was the investigation and measurement of affective responses to media. This report covers one mode of measurement of affective responses to a specific film, the content of which was thought to deal with the preservation of life and attitudes toward guns and hunting.

When film #1546, "The Hunter" (1972), was previewed by staff members to prepare items to measure its content, a concern was expressed by the reviewer that this film seemed to have a "greater message" than just its purported content. After three other staff members had previewed the film, consensus was reached by discussion that the film did have additional impact, and this was defined as an attitude toward guns, hunting, and the preservation of wildlife. The purpose of this investigation was to seek data to support the contention and to measure the change or potency of attitudes before viewing and after viewing the film. The specific question was "What change takes place in the response to the conceptual model after viewing the film #1546 "THE HUNTER?"

METHOD

The sample consisted of 62 children in the following categories:

11 normal sixth grade children (Pretest only).

51 intermediate (CA 11-13) EMR children.

These were arranged administratively into five classrooms who regularly visited the CBP film evaluation center to view films and answer questions concerning the content and reaction to them. Three classrooms (one at each level) received five items of the instrument but did not see the film.

An instrument was designed describing a concept which consisted of:

1. Avoiding using (having) a gun.
2. Movement away from desiring to hunt.
3. Desiring to preserve wildlife.

These concept parameters were translated into 10 items consisting of statements to which the S_s were asked to indicate his preference by responding to a dichotomous or trichotomous item pattern. The "correct" answer indicated the conceptual attitude model taught by the film. The instrument is reproduced in the appendix.

The treatment consisted scheduling the five classrooms on the regular schedule of evaluation used at CBP (1972a). A test consisting five of the items was administered to three of the above groups intermixed with items for another film which they saw.

ITEM SET	DID NOT SEE "THE HUNTER"	SAW "THE HUNTER"
#6 - #10	11 - 6th grade normal S_s	
#6 - #10	12 - Special Education S_s	12 Special Education S_s
#1 - # 5	15 - Special Education S_s	12 Special Education S_s

FIGURE 1: DESIGN OF TREATMENTS AND CRITERIA ITEMS

Two groups saw the film "The Hunter" and were administered five items from the above instrument (See Figure 1 above).

The responses were collected on the GE SRS system using as the correct answer the one that was conceived as the most desirable in terms of the stated "attitude model." Essentially this model stipulated that it was not desirable to own a gun, kill wildlife, or hunt.

The responses were summarized using a standard "scalar distance" computer program which produced an item profile in terms of the deviation from the model answers. The resulting profile is shown in Figure II below. The model is shown as the base line and the frequency of correct responses by the unshaded proportion of the box. The vertical division indicates the pretest proportion on the left and the posttest portion on the right. Movement toward the model would be indicated by a greater portion of unshaded area in the right side compared to the left side as shown in item #2. As can be noted only two of the ten items moved in the direction (item #2 and #7) and these were not drastic in comparison to the movement away from the model in items #3 and #6.

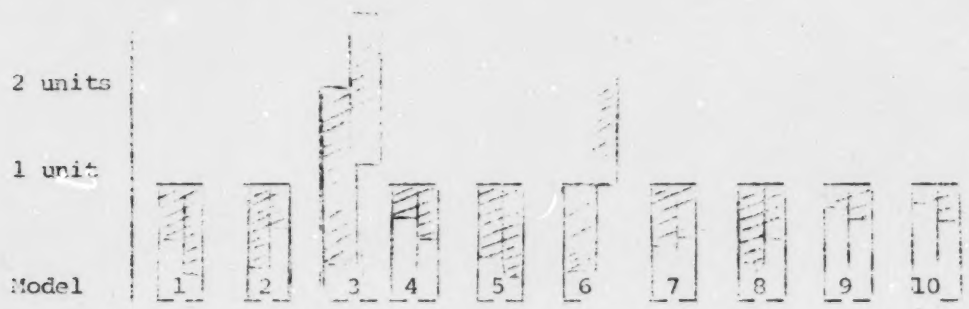

FIGURE II: SCALER DEVIATION FROM MODEL ATTITUDE RESPONSES

As can be seen those S_s who saw the film reported responses more deviant from the model than those who did not see it.

The changes were subjected to a Chi Square analysis for two independent samples (Siegel, p.104, 1956) to test the hypothesis that there was no change in pretest frequency.

	Model	Deviate	Totals
Pretest Frequency	66	47	113
Posttest Frequency	50	55	105
	116	102	118

The resulting Chi Square value was 1.024 which when compared with the tabled critical value of 3.84 for Chi Square with one degree of freedom at $p = .05$, indicates the null hypothesis cannot be rejected in favor of a significant change from the model after having seen the film.

The rank order correlation between the item percent correct scores from the independent pretest and posttest samples to indicate a reliability. A rho value of 1.0 was obtained for items 1 - 5 and .80 for item 6 - 10. A rho of .3 was obtained between pretest groups on items 1 - 5 compared to 6 - 10. These values tend to indicate a fairly consistent measurement by the items.

CONCLUSION

If the attitude model indicated by the correct answers is the one purported to be taught by the film, those NIR seeing it tend to be more desirous to own a gun, go hunting; e.g., to move away from the model.

It is recommended that this study be replicated using the ten items as a pretest several weeks before the scheduled showing and use them again immediately after and again a month later to ascertain if the attitude change is sustained over a period of time or just a short term response to the film.

A second recommendation is to consider adult ideals or "what should be" in terms of attitude with what really is. Maybe the models set up and verbalized as most desirable do not exist in reality. The initial (pretest) responses of Special Education Students tends to suggest that the attitude model proposed and assigned to "The Hunter" was not in harmony with that of the population tested (only five of the 10 items received a favorable response (agreement by over 50% of respondents).